

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BREMEN 00580 220837Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-15 /070 W
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R 220755Z DEC 77
FM AMCONSUL BREMEN
TO AMEMBASSY BONN
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 2456
AMCONSUL DUESSELDORF
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
AMCONSUL STUTTGART

UNCLAS BREMEN 580

BONN FOR ECON:TRC ATTN. MR. RANDOLPH

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EAIR, GW
SUBJECT: VFW-FOKKER DEVELOPMENTS

REF: RANDOLPH/BINDEMAGEL TELCON DECEMBER 21

1. ACCORDING TO LOCAL PRESS, BREMEN SENAT RESIGNEDLY AGREED WITH THE VFW-FOKKER DECISION TO STOP PRODUCTION OF THE 614 AIRCRAFT. SENAT PRESIDENT, HANS KOSCHNICK, JUSTIFIED LAND BREMEN GOVERNMENT DECISION BY POINTING OUT THAT CONTINUED OPPOSITION TO THE VFW 614 PRODUCTION STOPPAGE WOULD HAVE MEANT THAT THE GERMAN FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT MAKE A DECISION, AT ITS DECEMBER 21 CABINET MEETING, ON A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TO PUT THE VFW-FOKKER COMPANY ON SOUND FOOTING AGAIN. NO DECISION BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WOULD, ACCORDING TO KOSCHNICK, MEAN COLLAPSE OF THE COMPANY.

2. LOCAL PRESS ALSO REPORTS THAT MORE THAN 600 MEMBERS OF
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VFW-FOKKER LABOR FORCE WERE PLANNING TO GO TO BONN ON DECEMBER 21 TO PRESENT A RESOLUTION ON BEHALF OF ABOUT 10,000 VFW-FOKKER WORKERS TO CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT URGING HIM TO REFUSE TO SUPPORT THE PRESENT MANAGEMENT OF VFW-FOKKER. THEY PLANNED TO RECOMMEND THAT FEDERAL GOVERNMENT START AT ONCE ORGANIZATION OF NEW CORPORATE ENTITY DESIGNED TO TAKE OVER VIABLE PARTS OF VFW-FOKKER, EITHER FOR LATER MERGER WITH

MBB, OR FOR PARTICIPATION IN COUNTRY-WIDE UNIFICATION OF THE GERMAN AIRCRAFT INDUSTRY.

3. MEANTIME, THE CHAIRMAN OF LAND BREMEN SPD, HENNIG SCHERF, ACTING ON BEHALF OF THE SPD FACTION OF THE BREMEN BUERGERSCHAFT (PARLIAMENT), FILED CHARGES WITH THE LOCAL DISTRICT ATTORNEY (STAATSANWALTSCHAFT) AGAINST THE CENTRAL MANAGEMENT OF VFW-FOKKER AT DUESSELDORF FOR ALLEGED FRAUDULENT PRACTICES IN OBTAINING GOVERNMENT SUBSIDIES. SENAT PRESIDENT KOSCHNICK WAS QUOTED AS SAYING IN THE PRESS CONFERENCE THAT HE WAS SHOCKED BY THE SHIFTING OF ENTREPRENEURIAL RISKS TO PUBLIC BODIES. KOSCHNICK REPORTEDLY ASSERTED THAT GERMAN SUBSIDIES HAD BEEN USED TO FINANCE PRODUCTION IN THE NETHERLANDS.

COMMENT: IT IS WIDELY CHARGED HERE IN BREMEN THAT THE DUTCH ARE LARGELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FAILURE OF THE VFW 614 PROGRAM, DESPITE EVIDENCE THAT THE MARKET FOR THE PLANE WAS VIRTUALLY NONEXISTENT. BLAMING THE DUTCH ALSO REFLECTS EFFORTS BY LOCAL POLITICIANS TO CLEAR THEMSELVES OF ANY CULPABILITY IN DEBACLE. THE BRINGING OF CRIMINAL CHARGES AGAINST THE VFW MANAGEMENT WILL FURTHER ALLOW LOCAL SPD PARTY POLITICIANS TO DISASSOCIATE THEMSELVES FROM THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE LOSS OF JOBS RESULTING FROM STOPPAGE OF 614 PROGRAM. SCHIFFMAN

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